A SERMON

PREACHED

Before Their EXCELLENCIES

THE

LORDS JUSTICES,

At *Christ-Church*, *DUBLIN*,

The 29th of *May*, 1698.

By Edw. Smyth, D.D. Dean of St. Patricks, and Chaplain to His Majesty.

By Their Excellencies Special Command.

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2 SAM. XXII. 2, 3.

And he said, The LORD is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer.

The GOD of my Rock, in Him will I trust. He is my Shield, and the Horn of my Salvation, my High Tower, and my Refuge, my Saviour; Thou savest me from Violence.

THESE Words are part of a Thanksgiving Psalm, offered by King *David* to the Great GOD of his Fathers, for having Preserved Him through such a Succession of Dangers, as only the Arm of GOD could have Removed, and quietly Seating Him on the Throne of *Israel.* The Power and Malice of *Saul* had long Exercised Him in such Difficulties as seemed Insuperable, and which must have Defeated any other Force, but the Designation and Appointment of Heaven.

Viewing Himself then at the End of so many Difficulties and Dangers, in Peaceable Enjoyment of a Kingdom, Admired and Courted by His Neighbours, He lifts up His Soul to GOD in this Psalm; He Acknowledges GOD to be His *Rock, Fortress, and Deliverer*: He gives GOD the Glory of All His Happy Successes and Events, He Ascribes Nothing to His own Conduct, Prudence and Management, but All to GOD: He looks up to Him as His *Tower and Refuge, as His Saviour, who had saved Him from Violence.*

Our Church and Government do call upon us by the Yearly Return of This Festival, to Commemorate and Praise GOD for some very Considerable Blessings, Mercies and Deliverances: And if those I am now to offer to Your Serious Meditation be Really such, I need not take much Pains to prove that the Glory of them is due to GOD. Their being Blessings, does suppose them to be the Effects of that Favourable Providence which Governs the World. Their being Extraordinary, infers their Proceeding more immediately from Him, and that he has given a Particular Turn and Direction to Second Causes in producing them.

To put your Meditations on this Occasion into a proper Method, I will

First, Consider the Nature of the Blessings we are now to Commemorate.

Secondly, I will Recommend such Duties as the Blessings now Received do Require from us.

The Blessings we are to Commemorate, are the Restauration of our Monarchy and Established Religion: GOD in His Justice had Permitted These to be Oppressed and Overthrown for many Years, and in His Mercy has Restored them to us. The Designs of Men covered under the fairer Colours of Liberty, and a Purer Religion, had been long Successful, and seemed to Trample upon our

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Government in Church and State; but it has pleased GOD to Turn the Counsels of these Men backward, and to Defeat and Expose them, by Setling us again upon the Old Establishment. Thus it has pleased Him to Chastise, not to Destroy; to Correct, not to Ruine us. He has brought us back from Captivity, and Restored to us our Rights and Religion.

But because there are some Men under Dangerous Prejudices against our Establishment, and may be disposed to go in with Changes and Revolutions to overthrow it; To convince them that the Blessings for which we now Rejoyce, are Really such, I desire it may be considered,

First, That a Monarchy so Temper'd and Qualified as Ours is, has Advantages equal to any Form of Government that now obtains in the World; and that Liberty and Property have no where a more secure Foundation.

A great deal might be said in Vindication of Monarchy it self: It is the most Antient Form of Government, some have presumed to Affirm, that GOD Vested the first Man with Regal Power, made him Lord of the World, and King over his Children. The *Israelites* whose Rulers were of GOD's immediate designation, were always under this Form of Government, for the Judges were Kings; and tho *Saul* was the first who Govern'd with this Title, yet the Power was still the same. The World was near Three Thousand Years old, and the best Ages of it spent, before any other Form prevailed; and indeed Nature her self seems to Recommend it, this being observable of *America*, and other Nations lately discovered, who were wholly under the direction of the Law of Nature, that as none of them were without some Government, so no other Constitution but Monarchy obtain'd amongst them.

The greatest Masters in Policy among the Heathens do always prefer Monarchical Government before any other; witness *Aristotle* and *Thucidides*, who tho Bred under Flourishing Commonwealths, and as far Byassed in favour of

them as Education could turn them, yet always Affirm Monarchy to be the Happiest Constitution.

Monarchy has certainly many considerable Advantages in its Frame and Composition; Here Rebellions are more speedily Suppressed; Invasions are more quickly Defeated; Secrecy, Union, and Dispatch, so necessary for the Execution of all Great Designs, do here join all their Forces. And no other Form of Government could subsist without following the Methods of a Monarchy in many Cases. Thus we find the *Romans* had Recourse to Dictators, who were Princes with Sovereign Power for the time, in their greatest Exigencies; and Historians do Represent them to have often owed the Preservation of their Country to those Expedients. The Command of Fleets and Armies is best Managed by a Single Person, Divided Power has often broke into Civil Wars, and turned that Force which should have been Employed against the Common Enemy, against one another.

And tho We Enjoy all these Advantages of Monarchy, such is the peculiar Happiness of our Constitution, that we are safe against Arbitrary Power, and the other Inconveniencies which might seem to outweigh them. Our Government is so happily Qualified and Tempered, as to have secured a just Measure of Power to the Prince, and of Liberty to the Subject. The Sovereign Authority is not Despotick, but Political; We are not Slaves, but Subjects; 'tis equally out of the Sovereigns Power, and against his Interest, to become Tyrannical and Arbitrary. 'Tis as Injurious to the publick welfare to encroach upon the Prerogatives of the Crown, as it can be Hurtful to the Regal Dignity; and in this Happy Ballance, in this Golden Mean, stands the Wisdom of our Constitution.

But Secondly, What further Recommends our Constitution, is, That Temporal Prosperity and the other Effects of a good Government are no where enjoyed in a larger measure.

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Here our Prince is Exalted to be the Envy of the World, and the Arbiter of *Europe*; this is the Figure He now makes. In this Conſtitution the Prince and the People, the Governor and the Governed, have but one and the ſame Intereſt. Here He is the Father of His Country, where it cannot be His Advantage to ſerve the private Ends of Ambition and Greatneſs, but to make His People Eaſy and Happy. This makes Him not a *Machiavel's*, but a *Solomon's* Prince; Here He is not under the Temptation of Climbing up thro Corrupted Morals and Abuſed Religion, to dangerous unſafe Tyranny, but His Family being His People, His Proſperity their Wealth and Security, He muſt equally Conſult advancing both. And aſſuredly if it be the end of Government, that wiſe Ordinance of GOD, to make the Community happy, to Protect their Rights, and Encourage their Induſtry; there is no Conſtitution in the World that has made better proviſion for theſe.

Under this Government we are grown into the greateſt Extent of Trade; Arts and Sciences have Received very Conſiderable Improvements, ſo that the Wiſdom of our Conſtitution does ſhine moſt clearly in its Influence and good Effects; there never was a more Flouriſhing People; None ever Enjoyed the Bleſſings of This World in Greater Abundance and Security. We are juſt Delivered from a War in which the Fate of *Europe* was Diſputed, and it has been the Honour of *England* to have Turned the Scale, and to have given an Effectual Stop to the Overflowings of Tyranny and Uſurpation.

But Thirdly, What further Recommends our Conſtitution, is, That we never ſuffered any Abatement of Temporal Proſperity or other Civil Inconveniencies, I mean with Relation to our Government; but where the Ballance of it has been Changed, where Attempts have been made to Invade Liberty, or Diminiſh Prerogative.

No Kingdoms perhaps have ſeen more Dangerous Changes and Revolutions: 'Tis not an Age ſince our Monarchy

was

was quite Overthrown, and our King was made a Publick Sacrifice. The very last Reign does furnish a fresh Example of a King grown into Arbitrary Power, Trampling upon our Laws, Liberties, Properties and Religion. But these Mischiefs have plainly proceeded from Ruining our Constitution; the first, by Endeavouring to make it a Commonwealth; the last, by Attempting an Absolute Sovereignty. Whilst we kept within the Old and Just Boundaries, we were always a Flourishing Happy People: But when Wantonness or Wickedness have put us upon Changing, we have smarted and suffered for it.

Our Constitution is extreamly well suited to All the Ends of Government; its Natural Tendency is to Temporal Prosperity. But if Abusing and Corrupting it, has produced contrary Effects, this is the Fault not of the Government, but of the Managers.

I know nothing that ever yet fell under the Management of Men, that has not suffered by Changes and Abuses; and if our Constitution has been thus Treated, it goes but in the Common Course of things. What Vindicates the Excellency of it, is, That we were never Unhappy under it; but where the Ballance was Altered, where the Fundamentals of it have been Corrupted.

Fourthly, Another thing which Recommends our Constitution is, that no other Form of Government seems to sit easie upon Us, or to suit the general Inclinations of our People.

In determining the Fitness and Excellency of any Government, great regard must be had to this, what best agrees with the Inclinations of a People, under what Constitution they are like to be most Easie and Happy, and this is certainly preferrable with relation to them.

Men may dispute to the end of the World, what Form of Government is best, on what side the most Advantages and fewest Inconveniencies do lie: but from these Theories they can never conclude what Constitution will best suit with this

this particular People, unless they consider their Inclinations and other Circumstances; and there is no other way of deciding this Point but by enquiring under what Form of Government they have Prospered and Flourished most, under which they have been most Easie and Happy.

And that Monarchy so Qualifi'd and Temper'd as Ours is, is such with relation to our Country, do's I think not only appear from our having long Flourish'd under it, but that we have seen by very Expensive and almost Fatal Experiments, that no other Form of Government can Agree with Us, or sit Easie upon Us. When some Men seem'd to triumph in our Subverted State and Ruin'd Monarchy, when it was projected to destroy all our future hopes by Extirpating the Royal Family, into what Confusion and Convulsions did we then fall? We had been promised indeed mighty things, great Reformations in Church and State, but after a very great Expence, and some very Unwarrantable Practises we saw our selves deceived. And tho the Managers of Affairs at that time left no Stone unturn'd, but shifted daily from one Form of Government to another, to give some Relief to our Bleeding Country, yet all Applications proved Unsuccessful, all Expedients proved Unhappy, until the Monarchy was Restor'd.

Every Party had been Uppermost, to Try their Ability to Govern: We were brought into the Form of a Commonwealth, we Changed from this into other shapes; but All was in vain, we could not be Easie or Setled, before we Recovered our Old Establishment. The Transactions of that Time are a Blemish to our History; and if rightly Considered, give Evidence for Monarchy, do shew our Antient Constitution to be fittest for us.

Fifthly, They are strong Presumptions in favour of a Constitution, that it is very Antient, that it has long Prevail'd, that length of Time, and Experience, has Render'd it Natural to a People; that our Laws, Settlements, and our Civil

Rights

Rights and Properties, do All Depend upon it. Where these are the Circumstances of a People, they should be certainly very Tenacious of their Old Establishment.

Nothing less than the Highest Inconveniencies can Excuse, Nothing but Extream Necessity can Justifie Alterations of this kind. Upon this Foundation, and no other, Nations have proceeded in such Cases, and this I take to be the Common Sense of Mankind, and the Practise of the World, when they have gone by Reason.

Sixthly, It may be further urged in favour of our Constitution, That GOD's Providence has Interposed in a very particular manner, in Preserving it to us. Our History can furnish many Remarkable Examples to this purpose, but the Occasion of our Present Thanksgiving ought to be particularly mentioned at this Time. The Murder of King *Charles* the First gave a Dangerous Blow to our Monarchy; it was thought to be Entirely Banished with His Children, and that it could never Return to us. Our Constitution was brought to Equal Difficulties under the late Reign; Arbitrary Power Guided by a Spirit of Popery, was breaking in like a Deluge upon us, and we could see no Humane Means able to stop it. Has not GOD then a Peculiar Claim to those Extraordinary Proceedings by which we were Delivered? I do not like Bold and Unwarrantable Applications of GOD's Providence, or making the Designs of Men the Cause of GOD; but He had certainly a Visible Hand in such as we have Seen and Felt: And I cannot but Reckon it an Extraordinary Mercy to see our Monarchy Preserved through such Difficulties.

Our Constitution coming then Recommended to us from so good Reasons, the Continuance of it Appearing to me a Peculiar Blessing of GOD upon us: I desire such as may be Given to Change, to weigh Seriously with themselves the following Observations.

First, That they may be deceived in Judging Another Form more Perfect: If there are some Imperfections in our Consti-

Conſtitution, there are ſo in All Others, and in All Things that fall under Humane Management.

Secondly, That All Things Conſidered, the Model we Enjoy ſeems moſt Perfect and Suitable with Relation to Us; We have long Flouriſhed under it, we have been long Accuſtomed to it: Liberty is very well Secured, and Induſtry is well Encouraged under it.

Thirdly, That, Praiſed be GOD, We are under none of thoſe Difficulties or Neceſſities which can Excuſe or Juſtifie a Change. When we have fallen into ſuch Streights and Hardſhips as ſeemed to Oppreſs our Civil Rights and Liberties, it has pleaſed GOD to Relieve us, by Reſtoring our Conſtitution; and our Temporal Proſperity does ſeem to Depend on Supporting This.

Fourthly, Let Men lay before Themſelves the Hazards and Difficulties through which ſuch a Change muſt be Carried, and they will not lightly Engage in it. Changes of this Nature muſt be very Dangerous and Expenſive; They have often Iſſues very different from what the Firſt Projectors Intended: Men often loſe All, by Adventuring for More: Events and Succeſſes are not in our Power: The Advantages we have in Proſpect may Fail us, and we may be Abandoned to Lament our own Folly and Raſhneſs.

I hope every Man deſires the Proſperity of his Country, and will Endeavour to Preſerve that Liberty, which is now become ſo Rare a Bleſſing in the World; but I take the way of doing this, to be Securing our Conſtitution in its Juſt Extent and Limits.

We now Enjoy it in its True Luſtre and Proper Dimenſions; GOD has given us a KING, who might indeed be Truſted with our Lives and Liberties; and I think One who has a Right to them, by being the Inſtrument of Providence in Saving Both: Yet with what a Tender Regard to our Rights and Priviledges does He proceed! He has no other Will, but the Laws; No Pleaſure, but to ſee Juſtice Adminiſtred: Our Parliaments are Free, and left to Their

Just Sphere and Latitude. This Great Court is every Year Open; and Grievances can Arise no Faster than they may be Redressed.

It has pleased GOD to Bless us with such a Prince, as should be a yet further Argument to Recommend Monarchy to us, and to clear it from such Blemishes and Imputations, as the Mismanagement of the Two Last Reigns has laid upon it. To him under GOD, we owe, in a great measure, that there are such Things as Liberty and True Religion in the World: Our Churches had been before This Time Idol-Temples, and our Country under the Ravagings of Arbitrary Power, if GOD had not Raised Him up for our Deliverer.

And with what Fatigue and Hazard to Himself, has He gone through a Long War, to compleat our Deliverance! I have Trembled to see a life of so Great Value, Exposed and made as Cheap as that of the meanest Souldier. The Powerful Amusements of a Crown, and the Entertainment of Courts, which are the Common Idols of the World, could not perswade Him to stay at Home, and to live in Ease and Plenty; but He Applied All the Advantages GOD had put into His Hands, to Doing Good; and proceeded in the same Unwearied Course of Honour and Glory, until it pleased GOD to Crown His Labours with an Honourable Peace.

Another Blessing I am now to offer to your Meditation, is, The Restauration of our Established Religion, and that we have Recovered our Church-Government.

These Fell with the Monarchy, and have Generally had the Honour to Suffer with it; and it has pleased GOD to Bring them back together to us.

I have not now time to Engage in a full Vindication of our Established Church, and to make it Appear that the Order of Episcopal Government is Truely Primitive, that it obtained Universally through the Whole Church for Fifteen Ages; That the Imputation of being Popish, is so ill Grounded, that the Papacy of Rome has been the Greatest Enemy to

Episcopacy, and has Endeavoured Entirely to Subvert it, even in her own Communion.

I will therefore at present only offer the following Presumptions in Favour of it, which I hope may have some Weight even with our Dissenting Brethren, and so Relate to our Own Particular Circumstances.

First then, The Establish'd Church of *England* and *Ireland*, is what the *Roman* Church has always Endeavour'd to Destroy, and what they have Judged to be most Wisely Constituted. 'Tis worth our Observation, That ever since it has pleased GOD to Bless us with a Reformation, the Church of *Rome* has always looked on the Church of *England* with a Particular Jealousie, and Employed her Chief Arts against us. What Contrivances were there not used to Embroil the Happy Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, and to Extinguish the Reformation but then Dawning upon us? Missionaries were Authorized to put on Disguises, and to Sow Tares and Divisions amongst us. It was the Policy of the *Roman* Church to Destroy us by Dividing us, to Break us into Schisms and Factions, and by this means to make us either an Inconsiderable Enemy, or an Easie Conquest. The Managers at *Rome* began Early with these Arts; when they were not Able to stand against the Justice and Necessity of a Reformation, they then Endeavoured to Render it Fruitless by these Secret Practices of Dividing us.

I could heartily wish, That this Truth which Appears from Undeniable Matters of Fact in that Reign, were but Seriously Considered by those who continue the Separation; That they would weigh Seriously how these Divisions were made by the Professed Enemies of our Reformation, which seems to be a very Just Presumption against them. That they have Served themselves of many Advantages, by Clashing and Imbittering us One against Another. That the Publick Safety was very much Endangered by this Practise in the very last Reign. And that whilst our Divisions last, we are still prepared to be the Spoil and Prey of our Enemies.

These things Considered, do plainly shew the Necessity of an Accommodation; and that in Common Prudence we should Earnestly Pray and Labour for a Reconcilement.

I must mention it in Justice to the Episcopacy of the Church of *England*, That this has been Receiv'd at *Rome* with a Greater Degree of Envy and Malice, as may Appear from their many Base Arts, first to Disgrace it, and then to Overthrow it. They had forged a Groundless Story to Expose the Consecration of our First Reforming Bishops; And when this was Vindicated, they then Applied (and alas! too Successfully) to Breaking our Union and Discipline. And if our Episcopacy has been thus Treated, this Deference is surely due to those Great Masters in Policy, That they would never Employ their Greatest Force, but against the chief Strength and Bulwark of their Enemies.

But when the Vigilancy of Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign had in a Good Measure Defeated All the Secret Contrivances of *Rome*; when She had Discovered and Brought to Justice the Promoters of Schism and Divisions, when She had taken off the Disguise, and shewed them to the World to be Romish Priests: Then they proceeded to Excommunicate that Glorious Queen, and to Declare Her Subjects Exempted from any further Allegiance.

'Tis not to be Doubted but the same Restless Spirit of Popery was very Active in Endeavouring to Remove King *James* the First, because a Protestant, from the Succession; and in Bringing King *Charles* I. to the Scaffold. And 'tis most certain, that their Opposition to the Establish'd Religion, carried them into All these Practises.

I Need not tell you, That the Miseries in which it was lately hoped to involve our Nation, proceeded from the same Invetcrate Indefatigable Malice; When Matters were Ripe for Execution, Jesuites then Appear'd in our Ministry, they moved at the Spring of Business, and we have All felt their Malignant Influence, which must have Succeeded in Overturning our Church, and Subverting our Government,

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had it not pleased GOD to interpose a Wonderful Deliverance. *Rome* has indeed often Attempted to Oppress us by Open Force, but her Secret Arts to Divide us have been more Successful; these are the Stratagems which were Directed against the Established Church, because, in Their Judgment, Here lay the Strength and Credit of the Protestant Side.

O let us not then carry on the Work of our Enemies, by Continuing so Dangerous a Separation, but let us all Labour for a Reconcilement. This most Desirable Union is at all Times Christian, and tends to Edification; but if we consider the State of *Christendom*, is now Extreamly Prudent and Necessary: For if I am not very much out in the Observation, the Spirit of Popery is making large Advances to a Religious War, and Applies wholly to being Propagated by Policy and Force; they seem only to wait growing a little stronger (and GOD knows they grow daily) to Declare against us; and we know what Cruelty Their Church Inspires upon such Occasions.

But Secondly, Another Presumption I have to offer in Favour of the Established Church, is, That it is well Esteemed and Approved of, in the Judgment of most of the Protestant Churches abroad: Many of them have declared the Constitution of our Church to be Excellent and Primitive; and if in some Respects they come nearer to the Model of the Dissenters, yet do Profess a due Respect for our Church Government, and lament their own Circumstances for having hinder'd them to Reform so Regularly, and to carry their Bishops with them out of Idolatry and Superstition. Others, tho' they do not wholly Commend our Government and Discipline, yet Declare them Tolerable, and such as may be complied with; and therefore to preserve Church Communion and Unity, Men ought to submit to them. Thus the Reformed Churches Abroad have Expressed Themselves with Reference to our Divisions, and I know but very few of their Eminent Writers who Justifie the Conduct of our Dissenters.

Many Things are to be Lamented in the State of our Present

some Separation; Whereas were our Breaches looked at Home, we might be very Useful to all our Brethren Abroad, and we might yet hope to see an Union of the Whole Protestant Side. The Present Conjuncture seems to favour this Excellent Work; and if the Church of *England* were cleared from the Clog and Blemish of Divisions at Home, She would then gain Credit Abroad, and is, I think rightly Constituted to Mediate this most Desirable Peace.

But Thirdly, I may yet further Presume in Favour of the Established Church, That since it is our Unhappiness in these Kingdoms to be broken into many Communions, none could have been Established with greater Ease and Indulgence to All the Rest. I am not here to Account for the Heats and Mistakes of some Indiscreet Men of our own Communion, nor yet for the Acts of late Reigns, to Imbitter Us and the Dissenters One against Another, and so to Prepare Us for Ruining our Selves. What I here Affirm is, That the Judicious & Sounder Part of the Church of *England*, has always shew'd a Great Indulgence and Tenderness for Her Dissenting Brethren, and has Endeavoured by Means and Methods altogether Christian, to bring them into Her Communion.

But we have had Occasion to see it, that when Others have gotten the Superiority, They could Allow no Toleration to such as differ'd from them. Every Party was for Setting up an Inquisition, when it came to their Hands to Execute it, and then wholly forgot the Plea of Tender Consciences. A Man In Power, and Out of it, is seldom the same Thing; and this is Equally True of Bodies and Societies; Christian Charity and Meekness are what will Correct this Infirmity of Humane Nature, but leave Man to Himself, and He will Alter with the World.

Our Church has, GOD be praised, upon many Occasions showed that Temper and Charity which are the chief Qualifications of the Gospel Spirit, and I hope will Always distinguish Her Self by this Behaviour; so that no Difference in Opinion shall throw Men out of Her Brotherly

Kindness

Kindness and Christian Affection, but that Love shall Unite even where Opinions Divide Us. Christianity do's not Allow Persecution, and our Church Disclaims it; and I hope will never be deceived to practice any thing like it.

Fourthly, It may be further pleaded in favour of the Establish'd Religion, that our Dissenting Brethren have themselves Gained by this being Restored; many dangerous Doctrines and Practises had crept in among them, Antinomianism prevailed, the Holy Sacrament of the Lords Supper was Discontinued for many Years; it was Disputed whether Magistracy and Church Ministry were the Ordinances of GOD, and many like Extravagancies came in upon the Breaking of our Church. But GOD be praised these are in a good measure Beaten Down and Reformed by our Labours and Example; the Dangerous Doctrines are Silenced. We now Rejoice to see our Brethren brought to Monthly Communions, and to Join with Us in giving Vice a Publick Opposition.

Having thus gon thro the Blessings we are now to Commemorate, and endeavoured to to Represent them, that All may bear a part in our Thanksgiving.

I proceed Secondly, To Recommend such Duties as the Blessings we have now received do require of Us, and these are,

First, That We give the Glory of them to GOD. The Consequence is Natural from a Belief of His Providence, that to Him is due the Honour and Praise of all the Great and Happy Events we see in the World. And I think our Case has many Circumstances that do particularly Oblige Us to this Acknowledgment, both the Importance of the Blessings, and the Manner by which they were brought to pass, do shew them to be the LORD's doing, and that the Hand of GOD Interposed, that He over-ruled the Designs of Men, and wrought these Great Things for Us.

And what if the Blessing of our Restored Monarchy came with some Alloys and Imperfections? This is but the mixture which Man gives in the Dispensations of GOD; *Solomon* was

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certainly a great Bleſſing to the People of *Iſrael*, and yet He carried them ſundry times into Idolatry. The Bleſſings of this Life are all Mixed and Imperfect, and where GOD proceeds by the Miniſtry of Man, the Work will have this Impreſſion, and yet at the ſame time it ſhall appear to be GOD's Bleſſing.

To Him therefore be the Glory of it. And if We give Honour and Commendation to the Inſtruments of Providence in Great Succeſſes, if the Reſpects given to Men on ſuch Occaſions have ſometimes run into the Exceſſes of Idolatry and Superſtition; What Praiſe and Glory is there due to *GOD*, the great Author and Mover in ſuch Events, to Him who turns the Counſels of Men backwards, who Commands the Cruelty and Clamors of War into Peace and Silence?

Secondly, Another Duty enforced by theſe Bleſſings, is Reformation, and that We ſeriouſly apply our Selves to leading a Virtuous Life. The Streſs and Teſt of Loving *GOD*, is laid upon keeping His Commandments. And without this we can do nothing that will be Acceptable to Him. Vain therefore, nay Preſumptuous and Abuſive are All the Pretences of giving Him Praiſe & Glory, unleſs We obſerve his Laws.

Sin, if rightly underſtood, is a plain Affront to *GOD*, an Act of wilful Diſobedience; 'tis in its own Nature ſo Odious and Deteſtable to Him, that He ſent His only Begotten Son into the World to Expiate for it, and to Evidence His Diſpleaſure againſt it. If We are then in this ſtate, our Praiſes will be Hated Oblations: He cannot be Thankful who is Diſobedient, and a Sinner is not capable of Glorifying *GOD*.

And as the Sinner cannot Glorify *GOD*, ſo he Defeats All the Methods of Providence for his Converſion. The Bleſſings now given Us are a Call for Repentance, and in common Gratitude do oblige Us to ſerve and pleaſe *GOD*, who has been thus Bounriful and Gratious to Us. 'Tis thus applying them that will Render them Real Bleſſings to us, and if we neglect this, they will be Reckoned among the Opportunities we have loſt, of Growing and Improving in Piety.

Theſe are the Returns which *GOD* requires from us, and

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if we bring not forth the Fruits of Virtue, *GOD* can again throw us into Disorder and Confusion. His Arm is not shortened, and He will not always bear being Dishonoured.

Thirdly, Another Duty inforced by these Blessings is, That we contribute our own Endeavours to Preserve them: That we be not induced through Wantonness or Wickedness to change our Constitution and Church-Establishment, which have so many Advantages, and which *GOD* has Restored to us in a manner so very Extraordinary. 'Tis Ingratitude to *GOD* not to sit Easie and Thankful under His Blessings; and we must not always presume upon being Recover'd by Miracles.

Fourthly, Another Duty inforced by these Blessings is, with Zeal and Constant Fidelity to Acknowledge that Instrument of Providence, who has so lately Deliver'd our Church and State from the Overflowings of Popery and Arbitrary Power, and does still Preserve them to us. And here we are to Praise *GOD* for having filled His Heart with such a Conjunction of Uncommon Vertues, for having Preserved Him to us through so many Dangers, for giving Him Constancy to wade through so many Difficulties and Disappointments: May *GOD* long Preserve such a Publick Blessing to the World: We cannot be Accused of Flattery in giving Him Honour; in this we only follow the Direction of Providence, which has so signally Mark'd and Distinguish'd Him.

I hope there are none among us Insensible of the Great Things which *GOD* by Him has wrought for us, and how He has snatch'd our Government and Religion from the Brinks of Ruine. If there are still some under such Obstinacy and Prejudices, as not to see that Particular Hand of Providence which has Conducted us through such a Desart of Difficulties and Dangers, they seem to fall under the Condemnation of the Blind and Stiff-Necked Jews; and are a Plain Example how Bigottry, Worldly Regards and Party-Interests, may Betray and Overthrow Man's Reason.

Fifthly and Lastly, Another Duty Inforced by these Blessings is, Union and Agreement among our Selves. Our Miseries

came from Division, and should be healed by Union; this is the only sure Expedient under *GOD*'s Providence to Preserve our Church and Government: 'Tis an Advantage worth many Abatements and Condescentions; and who is Acted by a true Christian Spirit, will certainly go all the Lengths he can to obtain it. I have already observed, that as Union is at All Times Christian, and very much promotes Edification, so it becomes now Extreamly Prudent and Necessary, to Save us from an Enemy Cunning and Powerful, and who is making daily Advances to Destroy us.

Divisions are Destructive to the Publick Welfare, and often Fatal to Kingdoms. We need not go into History or Foreign Kingdoms, to learn this Truth; Our own Experience will Inform us, that by this Handle we have been always Embroil'd, and that we lie open to the Designs and Management of our Enemies, whilst we Continue this Separation.

O that our Country and Religion may be yet cleared from the Danger and Blemish of these Divisions! That the Name of Party may die among us; and that there may be no other Emulation, but who shall go furthest in doing *GOD* and his Country Service: And if we would do this Effectually, Let us proceed with Joyned Hearts and United Measures. This is Truely the way to Acquit our Selves as Good Christians, as Good Patriots, and as Good Subjects.

I will Conclude with this short Prayer:

Give us Grace, O LORD, we Beseech Thee, to Apply the Blessings Thou hast now given us, not to Riot or Carnal Security, but to a Serious and Thorow Reformation, of our Lives: Open our Ears to hear Thee Speaking to us in the Still Voice of Mercy. Preserve our most Gracious Sovereign from all the Attempts of Treachery and Violence; Give Him a Resignation to Thy Providence, and Give us a Sense of our Deliverance. Direct all the Worldly Advantages Thou hast given us, to our Spiritual Welfare; and grant that we may so pass through Things Temporal, that we finally lose not the Things Eternal. Amen.

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I will Conclude with this short Prayer.

Give us Grace, O LORD, we Beseech Thee, to Apply the Blessings Thou hast now given us, not to Riot or Carnal Security, but to a Serious and Thorow Reformation; of our Lives; Open our Lips to hear Thee Speaking to us to the Still Voice of Mercy. Preserve our most Gracious Sovereign from all the Attempts of Treachery and Violence; Give Him a Resignation to Thy Providence, and Give us a Sense of our Deliverance. Direct all the Worldly Advantages Thou hast given us, to our Spiritual Welfare; and grant that we may so pass through Things Temporal, that we finally lose not the Things Eternal. Amen.

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